

# WHY NOW?

*Presidential Executive Order 13148 (April 21, 2000 Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management) as well as Department of Defense objectives have mandated that defense agencies adopt environmental management systems.*

Current thinking realizes that laws and institutions are not enough to bring about true change in society. All federal facilities, including the Defense National Stockpile, are readily familiar with individual environmental programs (pollution prevention initiatives or environmental audits). The purpose of an environmental management system is to systematically organize these programs so that we continually improve our environmental performance.

The Defense National Stockpile has chosen to implement two management programs simultaneously, OHSAS 18001 and ISO 14001. ISO is commonly linked to, but is not a strict acronym for, the International Organization for Standardization, located in Geneva, Switzerland. ISO promotes the development and imple-

mentation of voluntary international standards, both for particular products and for environmental/ health and safety issues. ISO 14000 refers to a series of voluntary standards pertaining to the environmental field. Included in the ISO 14000 series are the ISO 14001 EMS Standard Specification and other supporting standards including environmental auditing, environmental performance evaluation, environmental labeling, and life-cycle assessment. OHSAS 18001 refers to a similar series of voluntary standards that address occupational health and safety (OHSAS), and included within that series are OHSAS 18001 Standard Specifications. These comprise procedures to establish an occupational health and safety management system to eliminate or minimize risk to human health and continually improve

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/ audit the OHSAS policy.

All the ISO standards are developed through a voluntary, consensus-based approach. Each member country of ISO develops its position on the standards, and these positions are then negotiated with other member countries. Draft versions of the standards are sent out for formal written comment and each country casts its official vote on the drafts. Within each country, various types of organizations can and do participate in the process including industry, government (Federal and State), and other interested parties; including non-government states organizations (NGOs).

The ISO 14000 and OHSAS 18001 series of environmental / occupational health and safety management standards are voluntary. While a number of government agencies, including the U.S. EPA and OSHA, are evaluating components of both ISO 14000 and OHSAS 18001, there is a conscious effort to maintain the voluntary status of the standards.

**Many companies have instituted environmental management and pollution prevention systems, some of which are: 3M, Ellwood Texas Forge, Xerox, Hungarian Oil & Gas Company, IBM, and Raval Paper Mills.**

**Each of these companies has instituted policies that reduce or eliminate negative impacts and increase those that are positive. Each of them can document that they have begun paying their debts to the past by reclaiming the purity of the air, water and our living environment. In so doing, they have also increased profits and enhanced employee participation and individual commitment to environmental stewardship.**

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